

Alfred; but he knew when he could serve God better by working than by praying. And this he kept in view all through his life. He loved prayer and reading the Bible as well as any saint, but he loved work and toil for his people too. His life and his mind were what we call well-balanced. And, still more he had one of those large wide sympathetic minds which can be keen and interested in many different ways, and on many different subjects. When there was fighting to be done, he showed himself a brave soldier and a clever commander; but when there was no fighting, he was equally ready as a law-giver, as a governor, and as a judge. He was like Bede in loving learning, and teaching. He loved music, poetry, and books; hunting, hawking, and building. He loved clever men and their company; he loved his family."—(p. 73)

Who will not recognize most of the characteristics we ascribe to the author in the following sketch of the Stuarts on page 463?—

"He (James I.) and all the Stuarts had as much love of arbitrary government as the Tudors, but they had not what the Tudors had, the gift of seeing and understanding when they might have their own way, and when they must yield. When the masterful Elizabeth saw that her will clashed with the will of the nation, she could be wise, and give in; but the Stuarts never did or could see that. It was in their time that the great struggle came, and once and for ever it was shown to all kings and to all people, that England was a free country, whose kings must rule according to the laws, and the will of the people, or they should not rule at all. It was a hard struggle, and cost one of the Stuarts his life and another his throne, but it was fought to the end, and will never have to be fought again."

A great deal of attention is given to the social condition of the people as well as to political institutions, and the author's wholesome opinions will prove a safe guide to the young reader in regard to those events which render history an important factor in modern education. We have never seen a better statement than this book contains of the benefits resulting to the English character from the

infusion of the Norman Element (p. 141), nor any that brings more clearly before us the causes that led to the signing of the Great Charter (pp. 207-9), and the establishment of Representative Government (pp. 228-31). The author is a little disposed to hero worship, and while showing a wholesome appreciation of the sterling qualities of our English Worthies; is very indulgent, if not altogether blind, to their faults. The heroic qualities of the first Edward, for instance, are extolled, but his relentless severity towards the Welsh is mentioned without a word of condemnation; and the only comment that is made on Bruce's sacrilegious murder of the Red Comyn is—that it was a terrible beginning to his exploits in his native land. The most serious fault of the work is the excessive space that is devoted to the earlier periods, only one third of the book being occupied with the Tudor, Stuart, and Brunswick dynasties. Hence we find several important omissions. We are told, for instance, that two thousand clergymen were turned out of their livings in the reign of Charles II., but we are not told that this was owing to their refusal to obey the Act of Uniformity.

No mention is made of the Bill of Rights or of the Act of Settlement, and there is but a meagre reference to the first Reform Bill. The author needs make no apology, as she does in her preface, for her quotations; they are so judiciously made that they form one of the greatest charms of the work. We hold that the true plan has been followed to let each age, as far as convenient, tell its own story. The sources drawn from are numerous—not the least fertile being Sir Roger de Coverley's great authority, Sir Richard Baker,—and no one can read the extracts from Fuller without a wish to read that quaint but sprightly author for himself.

We took the book up with a prejudice against it; we lay it down with a hearty commendation. Instead of supplanting other and greater works, it will serve as a hand-maid to them, and in the hands of an intelligent boy or girl, it will accomplish as much as Green's History in those of a person of matured and cultivated intellect.